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DELIVERED

FOURTH ANNUAL

OF

AMERICAN MISSIONS

AT ROCHESTER

SEPTEMBER

BY

REV. CHARLES

OF CINCINNATI

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DELIVERED AT THE

ANNUAL MEETING

OF THE

MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION,

AT ROCHESTER, N. Y.,

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ANNUAL DISCOURSE.

MATTHEW X. 34:

“ THINK NOT THAT I AM COME TO SEND PEACE ON EARTH; I CAME NOT TO
SEND PEACE, BUT A SWORD.”

THIS visible world, and that portion of the spiritual unseen with which we have been made acquainted, are, for the present, in a state of war. This conflict is the necessary precedent of universal and eternal peace.

God has his enemy, named through bad pre-eminence, Satan, *The Adversary*, chief of the opposing dominion, author of evil, head of all rebellion; distinguished among all wicked beings as the worst, and so fittest to wear the fiery crown of hell.

The moral characters of God and Satan are fixed for eternity. God cannot change, and Satan will not. Of course there can be no peace, no agreement between them; but on the part of God instead, infinite aversion and loathing, and with Satan, hatred and hostility to the utmost extent of a creature's ability, and open war against holiness and truth, until God shall crush and chain him for ever in hell.

The governments of these two beings are exactly opposed in their principles and their purposes; the life and success of the one necessarily involve the ruin of the other. Between their subjects there cannot in the nature of things be agreement or compromise. They who sympathize with God are wholly and heartily the enemies of Satan, and the lovers of Satan are the haters of God. Satan, as god of this world, has constructed here a system of things after his own heart. He has remodelled this portion of God's work, and having brought it to the worst possible condition, he pronounces it satisfactory, as, upon the whole, the most evil thing he could produce, the farthest possible from truth and God.

The world, in its perverted, Satanized condition, sympathizes fully with its monarch wherever the heavenly light has not penetrated its darkness, nor the power of God been exerted for its recovery. The unregenerate world is at peace with Satan, admires his character, and approves his policy. The introduction into such a world of a system of government and morals expressive of the character and will of God, would of course produce agitation and war.

This appears to be the meaning of Christ in the text, “I came not to send peace, but a sword.”

The infidel, we know, has based upon this and similar passages an argument against the character of the gospel, as if such an announcement could not proceed from a God of love, from the same Being who proclaimed, as the burthen of his birth-hymn, "*Peace on earth, and good-will toward men.*" We are reminded of the agitations and wars which Christianity, it is said, has produced, and we are asked if such a system is from God? Yes, we reply; and precisely because it reflects the character of God, has it been the occasion of conflict.

Satan, as the Scriptures declare, is the god of this world, reigning over loyal and admiring subjects.

If in a devil's kingdom a gospel should be published, which should be welcomed and cherished there—nay, even tolerated without curses and gnashing of teeth—should we not rightly deem it a devil's gospel, part and parcel of his own plan, born from beneath, and by no means proceeding from God, or expressive of his character? A gospel which can by no means win the approval of Satan or his friends, bears the sign manual of Jesus himself.

The gospel is charged with being a peace-breaker, and some of its ministers are thought to possess little of charity, prudence, or wisdom, because the quiet of society is disturbed. But there are some descriptions of peace which are more fatal than the sternest battle, that must be broken up even at expense of war.

The serpent which takes possession of your house has great peace while he stretches himself and reposes by your fireside; but who could refrain from disturbing that quiet, though he should rear his glittering crest in wrath, and bare the deadly fang? Peace, in such case, must be preceded by war.

The corpse rests in peace, in the hushed repose of death; but would not the mourners rejoice to see it broken by the struggle of returning life, though for the moment the body should thrill with agony, or be distorted with convulsions?

The Israelites enjoyed what they called peace in Egypt. They toiled like the brutes, and sat by the flesh-pots in brutal repose. It was the calm of the withered heart, of the deadened sensibilities of an intellect weakened and blinded. Pharaoh too had peace, while the victim did not struggle in his grasp—while there was none to wonder because of the oppressor, nor eye to pity, nor arm to save. But when Moses demanded that he should yield up his prey, rage and battle succeeded the quiet; he tightened his grasp, he doubled his villainies, and the people accused Moses of untimely agitation and disturbing the peace they had enjoyed. They mistook, as many even now do, the birth-throes of liberty for the agonies of death.

The demons in the time of Christ were at peace with their victims so long as they ruled and tormented them without control; but when commanded to come out, there was instant conflict—the manifestation of a devil's hate and revenge, wreaked on the torn and foaming sufferers.

The world itself is a demoniac, possessed of Satan, and the proclamation of the gospel is a summons from Christ to come out, a writ of ejectment against the usurping fiend; and the world's agony marks the parting struggle, the tearing and wounding of the demon, the terrible transition state between being possessed of a devil and being ruled by Christ.

This is the sense in which the gospel breaks the so-called peace of the world, and causes instead hostility and battle—sends "*not peace, but a sword.*" The declaration of Christ in the text is equivalent to this proposition: The true gospel, faithfully preached, will, from a law of its nature, excite hatred and opposition; and a gospel which finds favor with an unregenerate world, or with a worldly, backslidden Church, is to the extent of its popularity either false or defective.

If we admit that Christ has stated correctly the character of his gospel, and the

effects which its faithful exhibition will produce ; if we discover that he himself and his inspired preachers and most devoted followers met in their ministry the very consequences which he predicted, then may we learn the divinely appointed method for the spread of Christianity, and test by the Saviour's own rule the missionary efforts of our times ; for the method which they adopted was of course chosen by the direction of God, and so the only one perfectly suited to his purposes, the nature of the gospel, and the character of man. Their rule for presenting truth must also be a universal one, fitted to all times and all circumstances, because the law and the gospel address themselves to what is elementary, and therefore changeless in the nature of man. Their method of preaching, therefore, was one intended not alone for Jew or Greek, European or American, civilized or barbarous, bond or free, but for *man* ; and consequently should govern the missionary efforts of our own times at home and abroad.

Let us commence, then, with the prophets, and study this divinely appointed method of exhibiting truth in this fallen and blinded world. They, acting under the special guidance of the Spirit, presented the Law of God as the supreme Law of the Universe, which no compact or enactment of the creature can alter or supersede ; which repeals, annuls, and sets wholly aside every human statute that stands in opposition to itself.

They, instructed by God, claimed for his law universal jurisdiction, as a rule of conduct to be applied to every moral act of man, individual or associate, public or private, civil or ecclesiastical—a system of eternal right, a standard of action changeless as the character of God, in force for ever, through all space, and over all moral beings. There was no height of power to which sin could ascend, and plead there the privilege of position ; even David could not escape ; the king himself was the subject of God. No opinions, however universal, no customs, however popular, though shielded by wealth or protected by fashion, availed to win favor ; awaken fear, or change the terms of the message. The prophet asked not what would be popular, what would be safe, but held up the changeless decisions of righteousness and truth, however wild the agitation caused, however great the danger.

The sin of society, of the nation, was pointed out and condemned as readily as the individual transgression. No combination, however extensive, altered to their minds the nature of guilt. Sin, by naming itself organic, did not become so divided and diffused, that the separate particles were too small to be detected by the eye of God, or be holden by the grasp of the law. That other doctrine, so nearly forgotten or rejected now, the doctrine of associate responsibility, was insisted upon always without a hint of a contrary rule in the administration of God ; that moral partnership of communities, nations and all organized bodies, by which the sin of the body attaches to each voluntary member, and the whole body is also held responsible for the act of one. The transgression of one involved his whole household, and the iniquity of one tribe was visited upon the whole confederacy of Israel.

This was the character of the preaching of the prophets, under the direction of God ; and what was the result ? It is recorded thus in the 11th chapter of Hebrews : "They had trial of mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment ; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword." Did Paul deem these men injudicious or fanatical ? No ! no ! He says they were men of whom the world was not worthy. They preached as God would have them, and the world hated, and persecuted and slew them. Their gospel brought not peace, but a sword.

This law, thus proclaimed by the prophets, was neither changed nor repealed by Christ. The Jewish ritual and merely local enactments passed, of course, with the

nation away. But the moral law, with the added sanction of his own death to attest its inviolable character, Christ re-enacted and proclaimed as the universal rule for *man*—for Gentile as for Jew. By his death upon the cross, he provided a way of escape from the penalty; but the law, in all its original length, breadth, and strictness of demand, remains a changeless rule for every moral being. The demands of the law reach to the full extent of man's ability. The law is proclaimed from the cross in tones even more startling than those of Sinai; not, indeed, as a medium of salvation, but still a rule of conduct stretching its demands over all.

Let us turn our attention, then, to Christ as a preacher of the gospel, the model missionary, the pattern teacher. He studied no adaptation of his principles to the prejudices or popular customs of his country. As with the prophets, so with him, sin found no available cover or concealment. He published, it is true, general principles, as in his sermon on the mount; but then he arraigned each special iniquity, and, measured by the principle, it was tried and condemned. He spared no darling custom or institution because of its popularity, nor any mischief because it was framed by a law; and though sin was protected by the sanctions of religion and incorporated with the Church of God, he tore it away from the very horns of the altar. He found the law of caste existing in society, separating men into classes that would not associate nor eat with each other; and he turned against it the authority of his own example, and sat down openly to eat with the despised publican, and held familiar intercourse with the rejected Samaritan.

He found an extensive branch of commerce, inconsistent with the purity of the house of God; and though it had twined itself round the interests of the merchants, the bankers and agriculturists, was an established trade with much capital invested, and fenced round by habit and prejudice, he abolished it at a stroke, because righteousness demanded that it should be brought to an end. He pointed out the sins of classes and parties, not deeming men beyond the jurisdiction of the law of God, because associated in wrong. The lawyers and scribes as classes, the Pharisees and Sadducees as parties in the State, were each arraigned and condemned; and thus he carried through every department of human action the changeless law of righteousness, and demanded its adoption as the rule of life.

In all this he was the Model Preacher, an example for all time in the presenting of truth, and in dealing with sin.

In his hands was the gospel popular? Did it produce a calm or agitation; did it bring peace or a sword? Was it tender of popular or powerful sins? Did he study expediency, or did he declare the truth, and bring it to bear against every sin, in spite of the plottings of the Sanhedrim, the howl of the mob, the smittings of the soldier, the jeer and curse of the priest, the degradation and agony of the cross?

Let us turn a moment to the career of the Apostles, men who received their education and instruction from the Saviour's own lips, and were moreover enlightened and guided by the Spirit himself. As they went forth from Jerusalem, they were met by three great opposing interests, which then, as now, moved and controlled society.

First: They encountered the power of caste, separating the Jew from the Gentile. This first of all aroused the hatred of the Jew. The cry that the institutions of Moses were in danger, that Paul had admitted Gentiles to the privileges of the temple, that Peter was breaking down the separating walls between the Hebrews and the Heathen, and that all the disciples were confounding time-honored distinctions, and placing Jew and Gentile on the same level,—these things stirred the whole nation with indignation and alarm, and raised the storm that swept the disciples out of

Jerusalem, and scattered them even beyond the limits of Judea. This law of caste was stamped on the Jewish mind by all the power of early education and unvarying practice, was defended by the authority of antiquity, and by the matchless pride and prejudice of the Jew. Its power may be learned from the fact that Peter himself, while preaching to the Gentiles, refused for a time to eat with those to whom he was proclaiming a common salvation and a common inheritance.

This law, essential to the very existence of their institutions, and twined round every interest, habit, and feeling of Jewish society, was not suffered to slumber untouched amid its strong defenses, but it was denounced in theory, and openly abolished in practice. There was no stealthy, fearful casting in a few seeds of truth under the cold shadow of opposing principles and habits, trusting that the good grain would finally overtop the noxious growth already on the soil; but the thorn was cut down, and the bramble torn up, and the ground prepared, and laid bare and open to the sunbeam.

Again: There was the moneyed interest of society to oppose the gospel. In such a system as the gorgeous heathenism of Greece and Rome, requiring so vast an amount of decoration, the building and ornamenting of temples and shrines, the preparation of sacrifices, the commerce, the agriculture, and the more profitable and elegant branches of manufacture were linked with and depended upon the existing order of things; while the simplicity of the gospel worship threatened to ruin all. The capitalist saw his investment in danger, the operative feared that his employment would be taken from him, the agriculturists that one of their great markets would be closed. In Ephesus the influence of these fears was clearly exhibited. The capitalists and manufacturers cried out that their interests were endangered, that the prosperity of their city would be destroyed, and the general business of Asia Minor be interrupted; and the citizens held a mass indignation meeting in the theatre, and denounced the gospel by acclamation. This moneyed interest, clinging to self and mammon, and rejecting principle, confronted the disciples at every step of their progress, denouncing them as movers of sedition and subverters of the peace and order of society; and yet heathenism was everywhere attacked without fear or favor, the truth was proclaimed, and consequences were committed to God.

The apostles encountered also the ecclesiastical interest. A mighty priesthood, with its pomp and pride, its countless places of honor and emolument, jealous of its interests, and loving the possession and exercise of power, overshadowed the Roman world, the chief power and animating spirit of society. Here, if anywhere, was demanded of the preacher and private Christians a wise regard for circumstances, a prudent consideration of public sentiment, an inquiry as to what would be safe and expedient, a study of the established interests and order of society. Yet we behold, instead of this, an open adherence to and proclamation of the truth, an unhesitating exposure of error. Right and expediency were believed to coincide. The seed was fearlessly sown, while its protection and growth were committed in faith to God.

We may learn from the experience of Paul himself whether such a gospel, so published, produced peace or a sword: "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one; thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned. In perils by mine own countrymen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness."

Does this read like an extract from the diary of a popular, safe, prudent, acceptable preacher of the gospel, who, by sagacious adaptation of himself to circumstances, had won golden opinions from all classes, and left the great deeps of human pollution unruffled by a ripple?

Such was the character of the apostolic preaching, and it was followed by the very results which were predicted by Christ. The next era in the history of the Church presents us with a similar scene.

That was not a popular gospel which lighted the gardens of Nero with the living bodies of its preachers. That system of religion sought no conformity to the world, no shelter from its opposition or wrath, by blinking the truth, no favor from the wealthy or patronage from the powerful, by bending itself to circumstances, which brought its professors to be mangled by wild beasts in the amphitheatre, bowed them to the sword or nailed them to the cross, confiscated their goods, reduced them to slavery, or drove them beyond the reach of sympathy or hope.

These were the characteristics of that first missionary enterprise, successful beyond all subsequent example, which forced Satan back from all his strong defences, crushed in ruins the most imposing system he had ever invented, and left, through all the Roman world, the altar without a victim, the priest without a temple, the god without a worshipper.

An analysis of the teachings of Christ, the apostles and early Christians in this first missionary enterprise, presents us with three important statements, which are essential to their plan of instruction. These statements refer, *first*, to the character of the Christian; *second*, to the nature of the Church; and *third*, to the design of the gospel, and the demands of the law of God.

They represented a Christian as one who, by the inherent law of the new nature and in the very act of becoming a new creature in Christ, is separated from all known sin, and brought thus into sympathy with God, and made like unto Christ. Growth in grace then would not be the *gradual* crucifixion of the old man, extending through threescore years and ten; the body of death meanwhile, like the liver of Prometheus under the vulture's beak, reproducing itself as it is torn away; but spiritual growth is the development of a new life, the advancement of the new creature in Christ. Growth in grace would not be to attain strength to forsake a *known* iniquity, for the regenerated nature is *necessarily* repelled by sin; nor would it be to become more and more devoted to God, because the elementary idea of a Christian teaches that he gives himself *as he is* entirely to God, and although an imperfect creature, accountable for his imperfections, and sinful in his defects, because produced by himself, yet giving continually all that he has or is, and depending upon Christ to escape condemnation for the deficiencies in his character and exercises of his soul.

Growth in grace, then, as taught by the Scriptures, does not admit the idea of a present toleration of any sin, upon the supposition that we may devote ourselves *gradually* to God. It is not, *strictly speaking*, a process of reformation, but the growing up of a new creature toward the perfect stature of Christian manhood. We may lay each day upon the altar the soul's expanding flower; but morning by morning it appears more beautiful in its unfoldings, richer in the glory of its hues, and more fragrant with the breath of the Spirit.

The apostles presented one changeless type of the Christian Church, viz., a body composed of men wholly consecrated to God; separate from sin, and holding with it no fellowship or communion,—a body exercising discipline to preserve this separation, and thus witnessing for God, and reflecting the image of Christ.

They presented the gospel as involving the law, not alone as a plan for delivering men from hell, and placing them in heaven, but as a system of essential and eternal truth, for the regulation of all human conduct,—a rule of life which no circumstances could alter, and no power repeal.

These were the principles, and such was the method of proclaiming them, in that

first missionary movement which carried Christianity in triumph through the Roman world.

We will now consider a method of propagating Christianity quite opposite to that which has been presented—a plan of accommodating the gospel to the spirit of the world, so as to produce no opposition—so that truth and error should remain at peace.

Upon this plan the Church proceeded from the time of Constantine to the Reformation.

'Tis said the eagle, "in his pride of place," lured by the glitter of a weapon, will rush down the heavens to impale himself upon the flashing steel. Thus did the Church, soaring heavenward in triumph o'er her foes, and winning many a trophy for her Lord, catch a sight of the gleam of Rome's Imperial Crown, and swept downward to dash herself upon a throne. Wrapped in the purple, wielding the Cæsars' sceptre, and weary of conflict, she sought to be at peace with the world. She proposed alliance with paganism, the only condition of which was that idolatry should consent to be called by the Christian name. The temple of all the gods became the Church of all the saints; the statues of the heroes took the names of apostles and martyrs, and the departed Venus was replaced by the Virgin Mary.

The priest, the altar, the holy water, the incense and feast-days all remained under this peaceful gospel; and the consecrated wafer, offered as a true sacrifice, filled the place of the victim which had formerly been slain. This was Christianity made easy; it was popular with all, even with Satan himself; and the heathen became Christians by thousands without being conscious of a change.

We know too well what this system produced—a Christianity (?) which rivalled Paganism in its abominations—an ecclesiastical Rome, better fitted for every purpose of Satan than the heathen military despotism which had passed away.

A thousand years of experiment in spreading the gospel, so as to displace sin gently, in a safe and prudent manner, to bow Satan out of the world in a civil way, brought that world to Popes and Cardinals, Cæsar-Borgias, Inquisitions, Tetzels indulgences, convents, and the Jesuits.

This brings us to another era in the operations of the Church—the first great missionary movement of modern times, originated and conducted by the followers of Loyola, and carried forward on the same false principles which had already brought upon the Church a thousand years of apostasy.

These Jesuit missions, in some important points, may challenge comparison with any religious enterprise since the apostolic age. They evinced no stinted, narrow conception; the large design embraced every spot of earth where man had reared his dwelling; nor were the means employed inadequate to produce the result, had their object been to win the world for Christ, instead of subjecting it to the Papal throne.

These missionaries were men whose energy and courage were equal to any crisis, whom no labor exhausted, and no obstacles could arrest; whose patience and self-denial bore all burthens with cheerfulness, and whose steady enthusiasm admitted of no weariness or pause. It is questionable whether any other body of men on earth have combined so many elements of worldly power as these spiritual janizaries of Loyola.

There were once few places of earth where the patient, cool, subtle Jesuit was not weaving his web. With the caravan on Sahara's sands, or by the banks of African rivers; in the East Indian villages, in the cities of China; on the steppes of Tartary, and among Circassia's snows; amid the wilds of South America, or with the northern savage on his war-path, or teaching him in his wigwam; or building their

chapels and tinkling their bells on the islands of the sea; they labored to retrieve the sinking fortunes of Rome, and win from heathenism a compensation for what had been lost by the Reformation in Europe.

Why did they not succeed? They did not wholly conceal the great doctrines of salvation, nor were they all destitute of a sincere and earnest piety. What then was the vitiating principle of their enterprise? An attempt so to preach Christianity that it should not offend the prejudices of a fallen world; so to adapt it unto and blend it with existing systems, as to avoid a conflict; to leave untouched popular and deep-seated errors, and to flatter the prejudices and prevailing opinions of a people.

They nowhere presented the gospel as a changeless system of truths and rule of practice, to which every one was bound to conform, or forego the privileges of the Church. If the heathen would but adopt the Christian name, they were permitted to retain so much of error in opinion, and sin in practice, as would disarm both private hatred and public opposition. Caste and polygamy, pride, sensuality and oppression were left untouched, and the Church was composed not of holy men, separate from sin and consecrated unto God, but of those who perhaps, at some future time, when public sentiment should allow, would abandon iniquity, or at least would consent to be changed by the power of God, in the moment of death, just in season to make heaven secure.

In the hands of the Jesuits, Christ too was made to bear as many characters as there are nations under heaven. In India he was a Brahmin of high caste, while in the wilds of North America he was an unconquerable warrior. Where Confucius was preferred to Jesus, it was only demanded that a crucifix should be laid upon the shrine of the Oriental prophet; and where the doctrine of a crucified Redeemer was rejected, they preached only a Christ exalted and glorified. Christianity became like the Pantheon itself, a temple for all the gods. Each deity of earth had an altar, each idolatry a place; and Papal Rome effected what Pagan Rome once proposed to do—she placed Christianity, though sadly disfigured, *among* the religions of the world.

Where now are the fruits of this plan of compromise, this gospel of gradual reform, this peaceful, prudent, civil gospel, which sends a scented note to Satan with embroidered envelope, hoping that he will have the kindness to leave when perfectly convenient; requesting that he will not incommode himself with inconvenient haste; that the beginning of the Millennium will be quite as early as he could be expected to break up so ancient an establishment?

The earth was sown over broad-cast with the seed of this cringing gospel, asking of Satan leave to be; and where are the fruits—the goodly grain gathered to the garner of Christ? God has swept the whole from the face of the earth. From the Chinese seas around to California, the scheme withered in the breath of the Lord, and heathenism stood as before, except that the adversary gained this immense advantage—the standard of Jesus was hoisted over many of his strong defenses, and he lay at ease in his intrenchments, protected by his colors.

If, then, we discover upon investigation that our own system of church extension, at home and abroad, is based to any extent upon the same principles which we have condemned, and God has repudiated by his providence, then to *that extent* we may safely predict there must be either reformation or failure. I am not about to bring any special accusations against any body of men or benevolent associations. Let us deal with facts and principles, candidly and fearlessly applied, and wherever error is discovered, for the honor of Christ and the success of his cause, let us bend our energies for its removal. Let us examine first the operations of the Church on foreign shores.

In presenting the gospel to India, have we, has Christendom exhibited it as an uncompromising system of righteousness which held no fellowship with any manifest sin, which would throw a covering mantle over no form of error because strongly entrenched in the popular mind, or a part of the national policy? No! It was thought unwise to bring the gospel into direct collision with the strong defenses of the religious system in India; it was believed more prudent to exhibit only so much of truth as public sentiment would peacefully endure, and allow converts to retain some darling sins, such even as they would prefer to Christ, if really required to choose. Thus, by substituting a mistaken worldly policy for the wisdom of God, abandoning the examples and teachings of Christ and the apostles, caste, polygamy, and oppression were baptized into the Protestant Church, and so declared consistent with the law of Jesus.

We discover the same error, the same false principle, prevailing in the Armenian and Nestorian missions. The rites and ceremonies of those Oriental churches are clearly idolatrous, and yet the American missionaries have been instructed not to attack them, not to draw out of those churches the converts which might be won by their efforts. These idolatrous practices, we are told, are the mere outworks, not necessary to be removed before we come to the citadel. The idolatry of the Greek Church was thus virtually adopted as a portion of Christianity, as not at war with the principles of Christ. The Scripture rule is "Cease," first of all, "to do evil," then "learn to do well." "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." These general principles, suited to changing circumstances, have until lately, so far as I am acquainted, governed the Foreign Missionary movement; the "sapping and mining" method, instead of an open exhibition of the whole truth as it is in Jesus, has characterized the whole enterprise, except in the Sandwich Islands, an exception which strengthens every position I have taken. Let us consider a moment the effect of this upon the heathen mind. How, let me ask, is it possible by such a method to impart any conception of the elementary idea of the Christian scheme?

Of holiness, sanctification, the new birth, the heathen have absolutely no conception. They have neither ideas corresponding to our own, nor language to express them. How, then, are you to give a heathen a knowledge of holiness? You cannot enlighten him by any use of the abstract terms. You tell him he must be holy, sanctified; he comprehends you not—you convey to him no idea. He must inevitably be taught upon the plan adopted by God with the Hebrews—the only possible method—an external system of distinction and separation between holy and unholy, pure and impure, through which the abstract idea of holiness is begotten in the soul. What, then, must be the necessary idea of holiness in a heathen's mind resulting from the modern system of training? We inform him that a Christian must be holy; but there the proud Brahmin, with sin unrebuked, is admitted to the Christian Church, and so stands as an exponent of holiness. So with the polygamist and idolater. Pride, polygamy, oppression, idolatry, all stand in the heathen mind as symbols of holiness; they are the standards and measuring rods by which he shapes his ideas. He then starts from these data and reasons upward toward a conception of the holiness of God—and what sort of a God will be presented to his mind? Again, his standard of holiness will be the measure of his own guilt, and the demands of the law—and of course his ideas of these will be false and inadequate, and these again will conceal the true nature of the atonement. I am satisfied that too little attention has been paid to these important points. We have no occasion to wonder that our missionaries' hearts are so often saddened by discovering, after long conversations, that they have lodged no idea in the heathen mind corresponding to their own. It is impossible, in the nature of things, that it

should be otherwise; and Christianity, thus conceived, is merely a caricature of truth, perhaps rather a contradiction, a denial of the attributes of God, and the demands of the law.

Let us now turn to the Home field. Do we find in our operations here the same vitiating principle, the same bowing to the world's dictation, the same embrace and baptism of sin?

There stands American Slavery, that Colossus of sin, with one foot upon the State, and the other upon the Church, legalized and Christianized. The Church has adopted it, baptized it, and pretends to set upon it the seal of God's approval. Conforming her practice to her theory, the Evangelical Church has invested in slave property \$264,000,000, and owns 660,000 bodies and souls of men, and by their natural increase produces yearly more heathen on our own soil, than her efforts win for Christ on foreign shores; so that the Church is absolutely increasing the heathenism of the world by her direct exertions; multiplying heathen at home faster than she converts them abroad; and yet she is confident that she beholds the dawn of the millennium. Yet that Church stands before the world as the exponent of Christianity. With this enormous iniquity in her bosom she represents the idea of holiness; she is the world's teacher as to what a sanctified Church is; she shows men what it is to be holy, separate and undefiled; she is the earthly representative of the character of God; and the scheme of Christianity, and the world's abstract idea of holiness, correspond in measure, and necessarily, to this external exhibition of it which the Church has made. She gathers into one body with true Christians, slaveholders and Sabbath-breakers, rum-makers and rum-sellers, and a variety of smaller sinners; and when we ask what is meant by God's peculiar people, holy and undefiled, the regenerate, the sanctified, the people in sympathy with Christ, the elect of God whom he approves, we are pointed to this miscellaneous collection as embodying the Bible idea of the Church of God, the Bride of the Lamb. This is false teaching, of the most powerful and pernicious kind; and the effects have been widespread and fatal in vitiating the public sentiment, in unsettling the first principles of morality, and in obscuring our conceptions of righteousness and God. It is vain to assert that the true theory of holiness and the character of God is abundantly taught in our churches, and by the religious press. It is true that the same language is still employed, but words of themselves are powerless. When the preacher demands that men should become holy and unite with the Church, and when he exhorts them to become holy like God, the question is, what meaning is attached to the language; to what ideas does it correspond? The Church has taught us new definitions, and the world understands the preacher to mean that she must become holy as a slaveholder, or a distiller or vender of alcohol, or as one who invests his capital in Sabbath-breaking steamboats or railroads; as holy as a God who approves of such things,—as holy as a Saviour who welcomes them to his communion. It is not a fact that the true theory of holiness and sanctification is taught in the churches, though the old words are retained. The Church by her practice has taught the world new definitions of language.

As a result of these things, two joint powers are brought to bear upon the destiny of the heathen world—Christianity as it is, and the civilization which she has produced.

Through their co-operation, a ship reaches a heathen port from Christian America, and its company, as a whole, to the heathen mind, is an exponent of the religion of Jesus. This is the fruit of the system. The Christian missionary lands with his Bible, the Christian merchant with his whiskey and rum and all the means of driving good bargains, (all, of course, fair business transactions,) and the Christian

sailor, in his degradation and sensuality ; and all these, to the poor pagan, are alike *Christians* ; he can make no distinctions. Again : China or Mexico is to be opened to the gospel, and by the joint action of civilization and Christianity. But the avenues are opened, not gently in love, but torn open by crashing shot and rending shell, and through the breach, and over smokin' fragments of ruined houses, over quivering corpses, and through spouting blood, the Christian missionary with the Bible marches by the side of the *Christian* soldier with his shotted gun and blood-dyed bayonet ; and this scene, as a whole, becomes to the Chinese and Mexicans an exponent of Christianity and Protestantism. Nor can it be otherwise. And how much will the impression be changed for the better, if the missionary draws distinctions between Christianity and civilization, and then to make clear what he means by the terms he uses, forms a Christian Church, and there sets together around the table of caste, as examples of God's holy and peculiar people, the Brahmin, with his pride of caste, the polygamist, the slaveholder, the Sabbath-breaker, and the rum-seller ? Doing this, if the heathen asks an explanation, he must either allow that the Church is composed of unholy men, or that such men are the proper examples of Christian and godly living, and from them he must judge of the Christian's God.

Of these two forces what will be the result ? The utmost possible effect of these powers, if unchanged themselves, will be to extend over heathen lands a Christian civilization like unto our own ; and when that is accomplished let us inquire whether the dawn of the millennium will redden the east, or its meridian splendor blaze over all the heavens ?

A very brief statement will be sufficient to show us what the condition of the world will be, when converted to our present standard of Christianity and civilization. We will assume our own country as the standard, and without pretending to state numbers with more than an approximation to the truth, we will set down the population of our nation at twenty millions, and the number of heathen in the world at seven hundred millions. Should these pagans be converted to our present condition, there would then be, on what is now heathen ground, one hundred millions of church members, and also *one hundred millions of slaves ! and nineteen millions of these slaves would be owned by professors of religion.*

In the United States it is estimated that one in seven is a professor of religion. After the heathen world has been exalted to our position, Christianized up to our standard, there will remain on the present pagan territory *six hundred millions of unconverted men.* Carrying forward this comparative view, we find that after such a conversion of the world there will be seventy millions of paupers, seven millions of criminals, and seventeen millions and a half of drunkards outside of the limits of Christendom. It is estimated by a late writer that the evangelical Church of this country owns two hundred and sixty millions of so-called slave property. If the one hundred millions *to be converted* on heathen lands shall own proportionately as many slaves, this millennial Church will have such an investment of eight thousand millions of dollars. If we now add the remaining features of our civilization, it will present us with a picture of the world as it would be, if converted to our present Christianity and civilization.

I hold it a self-evident proposition, that to produce such a state of things is the very highest achievement of which the Church, in her present condition, is capable. Neither her example nor her precepts can carry the world one step beyond this. But to advance the nations from this point of universal civilization like our own, onward to the millennial state of the Scriptures, is a far more difficult task than to bring the heathen to the condition of Christendom.

Underneath this wrong action of the Church there must of course be some error

of opinion, some false theory, upon which the erroneous conduct is based. Could we discover this, we should possess a sure guide in the work of reform. To my mind it seems apparent. Does not this wicked and mischievous departure from the course of Christ and the apostles spring from inadequate ideas of what constitutes a Christian, and of the development of the Christian life in the individual and in the Church?

I do not mean that our theoretical standards are deficient: our formulas state correctly the great doctrines of the Christian scheme: but these statements of doctrine no longer present to the public mind the original ideas. The Church exhibits in her *practice* her conception of the meaning, and these *practical definitions* which form the world's dictionary of the Bible, have essentially changed the conception of the whole scheme of truth.

Practically, then, not in her theories, the Church presents to the world the idea of a Christian somewhat in this manner: That he is one who, having had his mind awakened and enlightened in regard to eternal things, in view of the character of God and the claims of the law upon him as a transgressor, determines to flee to Christ for pardon for past offenses, and to reform his errors in future. This reformation, however, is to be the work of a life-time, a *gradual* putting away of sin, to be completed only at death; and therefore that some sin should be indulged in day by day is only a matter of course, and the professor comforts himself each day with the belief that he is as holy as could be expected at this stage of his career; for the Christian life is a progress toward holiness and God, and the work of reform cannot be finished until the hour of death. This progress in reform is thought to be growth in grace. Now, though man is reformed by the sanctification of the Spirit, yet, strictly speaking, growth in grace is not a work of reformation, but the development of a new life in the soul, the growth of a new creature. The man being made like unto God in the new creation of the Spirit, turns by the instincts of this new nature from every known sin, and the work of sanctification is not the slow putting to death of the old man of sin, but the expansion towards maturity of the capabilities and desires of the new nature in Christ. This practical error, in regard to the individual, leads to another in reference to the progress of the Church. As practically exhibited, the idea of the progress of the Church is, that commencing in a state of spiritual barbarism and ignorance, she gradually increases in holiness and spiritual excellence from age to age, growing up towards the millennial state, the perfected civilization of the Church.

This conception of the life of the Church involves the idea that until the millennium sin must of course be found in her bosom—that there can be no perfection until then; that if we find slaveholding and intemperance and other iniquities at the table of Jesus, we are not to be surprised; for these things will be gradually reformed, the Church is making progress, and is upon the whole as holy and pure as could be expected in this stage of her life. In support of this system, we are told by men high in the confidence of the Christian public, to remember the condition of the apostolic churches, their irregularities, their incest, and even drunkenness at the communion; and we are asked to look around us now, and mark the advancement of the Church, to be thankful, and wait patiently for the millennium.

In an important sense, this whole idea is essentially false: it presents an entirely erroneous conception of the nature of the Church and her early condition.

The fixed and changeless type of a Christian Church is, a body of men who are like Christ. *Christians* wholly devoted and set apart unto God. *Anointed* ones. Such a body can have no growth or progress in separation from sin, in consecration to God. The changeless idea is, that in every moment of its life,

from infancy to the millennium, it is *entirely* consecrated to God, *entirely* separate from known sin. The idea of the life of the Church is not a progress from impurity to purity, but of a body *always* consecrated to God, and battling for victory, in the name of Christ.

The true Scriptural idea of the Church, then, precludes entirely the toleration of known sins for the present, with the design of gradual reformation—the putting away of iniquity in the indefinite future—a future which unfortunately never becomes the present, so as to call for action. The reference to the early Church is altogether unfortunate. Paul spoke of no present toleration, no waiting for the *coming* millennium, but he commanded *instant* discipline and separation. “Therefore, put away from among you that wicked person.” This “little leaven will leaven the whole lump” with sin and pollution.

If we have discovered the vital and basis error in our present methods of exhibiting the gospel, then may we also perceive the necessary and essential principle of a true reformation—the only one which has power to meet the exigencies of the case: viz, the entire consecration of the individual soul to God, and the complete separation of the Church from every known and tangible sin—the exhibition of the gospel as containing a system of truths changeless as the character of God—a rule of conduct claiming jurisdiction over every department of human action, and demanding obedience in the name of Jesus our King; that higher law which preceded all, which is above all, which endureth for ever; the Word and Law of God. These, my friends, are the great ideas which form the deep, central power which is now heaving beneath the foundations of the Christian Church, struggling to be manifested, to embody itself in definite systems and forms of action. If this whole continent were at once to be shaken by one huge earthquake, the same great central power would produce different results in different locations. Here, it might heave up an island; there, topple down the crest of a mountain. Here, it might bury a city; there, change the course of rivers, and all by the same central force. So with this central spiritual power of the principles I have named. Underneath the wide foundations of the whole Church, it gathers its mighty forces, exhibiting itself through various manifestations, shaking with many agitations the structure of society. Here men behold one effect, and there another; here it produces a temperance reformation; there, anti-slavery societies and conventions; and here a missionary organization, which aims at a higher and purer exhibition of the Christian life.

Men may doubt, and sneer, and wonder, and stand aloof or oppose—but they must learn that these are all the results of a spiritual life which is struggling to embody itself upon the surface of affairs. These agitations are at the same time the death-struggles of dying systems and errors, and the birth-throes of a new era. The scene around us, my friends, is the rough and stormy spring, and seed-time—but there will come the calm of summer, and the golden autumn, and the rich harvest, ripe for the heavenly garner.

Men may cry out, “fanaticism and folly.” Never was there a more fatal mistake. ’Tis the strong uprising of ten thousand souls that long for a closer walk with God, and yearn for a deeper, truer sympathy with Christ—of men and women whose daily prayer and hearts’ desire is, to be one with Jesus, to have their own life merged, as it were, in the life of God. They long, moreover, to see that bitterness assuaged and that animosity removed, which has separated into warring parties and sects the hosts of the Lord—like broken fragments of one mountain scattered apart by an earthquake—to see Christians brought into such close communion, that all

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